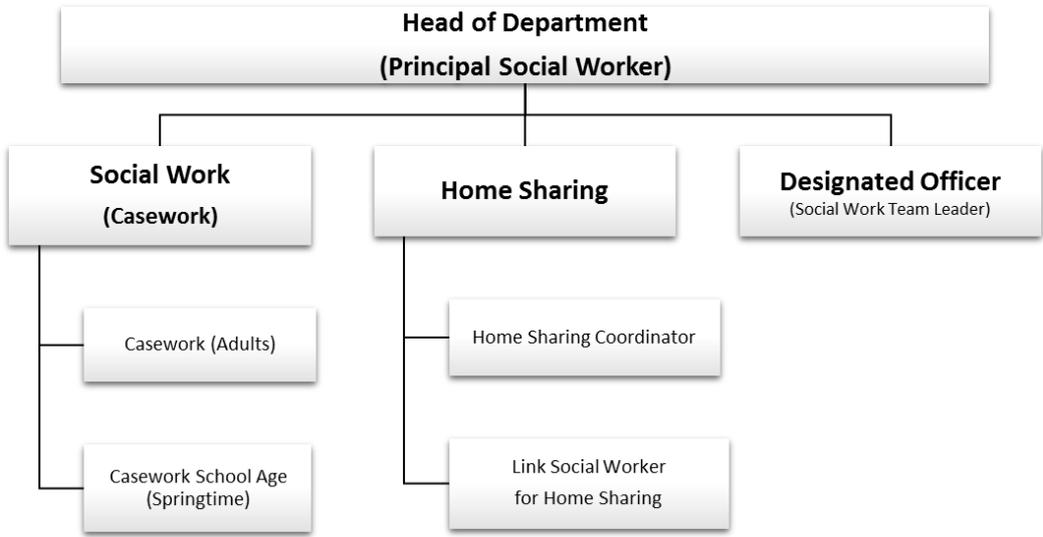




Job Description: Head of Social Work

Job Element	Detail
Overview of Ability West	<p>Ability West provides a wide range of high-quality community-based services for people with an intellectual disability and autism throughout Galway City and County. Services provided are day services, residential, short break respite services, supported self-directed living programmes, outreach services, community supports, educational, rehabilitative training and multi-disciplinary supports. The ethos of service provision is underpinned by our Vision, Mission, Core Values and Strategic Plan, to empower people with disabilities to live self-directed lives in an equal and inclusive society. Each person is supported and valued within an environment which promotes their overall autonomy, health and wellbeing and enables them to reach their potential.</p>
Job Title	<p>Head of Social Work</p>
Overview of Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall responsibility for the provision of Social Work to Ability West services inclusive of (1) Casework (2) Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults against Abuse and (3) the delivery of a Home Sharing service. • Supervision of the relevant Social Work staff and the Home Sharing Coordinator. • The management of the Designated Officer/Safeguarding system, delivery of Safeguarding training, the management of a busy Duty Social Work system and responding directly to crisis situations. • Taking a lead role with delegated functions on behalf of Client Services Directorate such as admissions and short breaks, service planning etc. • The head of Social Work will hold an agreed caseload of complex cases and will provide guidance and respond to cases directly in addition to the management of referrals to Social Work.
Purpose of Role	<p>The Principal Social Worker will hold a leadership role, planning and managing change within the Client Services Directorate. Within the context of leadership and change, the person will require high levels of influencing skills and highly developed interpersonal skills. They will have a role within the organisation in leading, guiding and facilitating the development of responsive, innovative, and individualised solution focused approaches to support service users and their families. This will involve keeping up to date with Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults</p>

	<p>and Children’s First policies and procedures, Home Sharing policy and procedures, best practice issues, current trends, legislation and research to support and inform responsive solutions to service users’ life choices and the needs of families.</p> <p>The Principal Social Worker as Head of the Social Work department, will work with members of the team offering supports to service users and their families ensuring they are supported to enjoy their best quality of life possible and maintain their place in the community. They will undertake work at a professional practice level in addition to a leadership role within the organisation.</p>
<p>Reporting To</p>	<p>The post holder reports directly to the Director of Client Services.</p>
<p>Key Working Relationships</p>	<p>Director of Client Services, Chief Executive Officer, Director of Finance, Director of Human Resources, Assistant Directors of Client Services, Assistant Director of Human Resources, Assistant Director of Finance, Quality and Compliance Manager, Multi-Disciplinary Team, Unit Directors/Managers.</p>
<p>Organisation structure in regard to this Role</p>	 <pre> graph TD HOD["Head of Department (Principal Social Worker)"] SW["Social Work (Casework)"] HS["Home Sharing"] DO["Designated Officer (Social Work Team Leader)"] CA["Casework (Adults)"] CSA["Casework School Age (Springtime)"] HSC["Home Sharing Coordinator"] LSW["Link Social Worker for Home Sharing"] HOD --- SW HOD --- HS HOD --- DO SW --- CA SW --- CSA HS --- HSC HS --- LSW </pre> <p>Please note that Ability West reserves the right to amend or change the organisational structure at any time to meet service and business needs.</p>
<p>Department/ Location</p>	<p>The role will be based at Blackrock House, Salthill with frequent travel to other locations in accordance with service needs.</p>
<p>Authority Levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication – Service Users, families, and relevant external stakeholders.
<p>Key Duties</p>	<p>Leadership Role Undertake a diverse range of duties at organisational level including involvement in the development of strategy, planning and management of change, policy</p>

development, (as a member of the Policy Advisory Group).

- Analysis of problems and complex caseworks. A combination of strategic management and specialist skills are required to deal with the complexity and diversity of the issues in this regard.
- Lead and oversee the Social Work team with full management responsibility for the Social Work service and its contribution to service users, multi-disciplinary/inter-disciplinary teams and the wider organisation.
- Ensure that appropriate supervision is provided for Social Workers and the Home Sharing Co-ordinator within the department to ensure appropriate professional support and direction.
- Facilitate effective communication within the context of the leadership role. This will require high levels of influencing skills and highly developed interpersonal skills to communicate in a lead role both within the organisation and externally in the public environment.

Management Role

- Ensure that team members are supervised and supported to work to the highest quality in work performance and best practice and promoting empowerment within the team and ensure that regular evaluation of Social Work intervention occurs.
- Proactively contribute at management level within the organisation and within the intellectual disability sector within the HSE and other external agencies.
- Assume overall responsibility in managing the Social Work service, to include Casework, Safeguarding and Home Sharing.
- To plan, direct and co-ordinate the resources available and management of the department and the Home Sharing budget, in order to provide a high standard of support to service users, their families and to Home Sharing Families.
- Oversight in recruiting and interviewing new Social Work and Home Sharing staff as required.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of responsive models of service at an organisational level ensuring appropriate consultation with service users, their families and relevant stakeholders and ongoing evaluation. This will involve having knowledge and understanding of current research and trends and legislation to facilitate innovative responses to service user's life choices. It will also involve application of expert knowledge and skills.

Management Responsibilities Specific to the Head of Social Work Role

The aim of the Social Work Department is to work with service users and their families who are experiencing difficulties or impasses in the social areas of their lives. Social work may be required either alone or as part of a multi-disciplinary intervention. The Ability West Social Work procedure outlines the role and functions of the department in detail. The Head of Social Work must ensure the Ability West policy and procedure on Social Work, Safeguarding and Home Sharing is adhered to.

- Management of Social Work services in Ability West.
- Responsibility for the strategic development of the team.
- Management of Social Work casework to Adults availing of Ability West services and to those applying for services.
- Management of Social Work casework to Children's services under the Springtime Children's service.
- Overall management of the Home Sharing service within Ability West.
- Support and supervision of all Social Work department Members including the Home Sharing Coordinator.
- Management of referrals to the department and assignment of cases to the team.
- Responsible for the development and of the 'Full-time Living Options' Prioritisation system and database in Ability West.

Safeguarding

- Each agency providing services to people who are vulnerable must appoint a Designated Officer. The Designated Officer is responsible for the management of the responses to **all** safeguarding and protection issues within Ability West, overseen by the Head of Social Work.
- The Designated Officer in Ability West is a Social Work Team Leader who is a member of the Social Work Department. The Head of Social Work chairs the Ability West Safeguarding & Protection Core Group.

Access to Services Committee & Process

- The Social Work Department has a key role in supporting individuals and their families when they are experiencing difficulties at transition periods, e.g. leaving school, leaving home, seeking supported living etc.
- The Head of Social Work is the chairperson of the Access to Services Committee within Ability West.

Provision of a Home Sharing Service

- The Home Sharing Department within Ability West resides within the Social Work Department. The Home Sharing service includes Home Sharing (short breaks), Contract Families and Shared Living. Ability West's Home Sharing staff (including the Head of Social Work) are responsible for the provision of a substantial Home Sharing service on behalf of Ability West.
- The Home Sharing Team in Ability West consists of a Home Sharing Coordinator and Link Social Workers for Home Sharing. The Head of Social Work supervises all Home Sharing staff including Home Sharing Link Social Workers and the Co-ordinator.

Service Provision and Planning

- The Head of Social Work may receive referrals from external agencies and plays a key role in line with the 'Access to Services: Admissions, Referrals & Discharge' policy and procedures.
- The Social Work team will assist in the prioritisation and updating of the Residential/Full-Time Living Options database in liaison with the Director of

	<p>Client Services and with relevant colleagues and management within Ability West. This database is managed by the Head of Social Work and provides information to the Residential Review Group, Client Services and to Senior Management when required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Head of Social Work participates in the ‘Short Breaks Respite Prioritisation Committee’ which assesses and prioritises applicants for all types of short breaks respite provided by Ability West. • The Head of Social Work represents Ability West on the National Safeguarding Committee and on the National Home Sharing Network. • The Head of Social Work works in partnership with operational managers and other colleagues to identify needs, solutions and to advocate on behalf of individuals within the services and those applying to Ability West for services. <p>Duty System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Social Work department operates a Duty Social Work System from Monday – Friday during office hours. This is co-ordinated and supervised by the Head of Social Work. <p>Social Work Supervision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Work supervision is an essential component of social work practice. Its function is to support the social worker in dealing with often difficult and conflicting needs, to ensure best practice and accountability both professionally and to the organisation. This is a requirement for CORU registration. The Head of Social Work avails of external Social Work supervision from a suitably qualified Principal Social Worker. This is allied to the Staff Development and Support system in Ability West. • Each Social Worker will receive formal supervision approximately every 6-8 weeks from the Head of Social Work. <p><i>The list of key duties is not exhaustive.</i></p>
<p>Other Requirements of Post</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability and a flexible approach. • Ability to conduct oneself in a professional manner throughout the course of one’s duties. • Adherence to Ability West’s policies at all times.
<p>Person Specification: Essential Criteria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a recognised professional qualification in Social Work prescribed under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended) or, have a Letter of Validation issued by CORU/National Social Work Qualifications Board. • Be eligible for registration with CORU. • Possess satisfactory experience working with children and adults with intellectual disability and their families. • Possess a high standard of administrative and management experience. • Full current driving license with access to your own vehicle • Knowledge and experience of working with an implementing Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policies and procedures.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates must have the ability to exercise good judgement, discretion and confidentiality and to communicate effectively, verbally and in writing. • Candidates must have a proven track record of working well within a team, with inter-disciplinary/ multi-disciplinary colleagues with a person-centred philosophy. 		
Desirable Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient clinical and professional knowledge to carry out the duties of the role. • Budget Management experience (relevant to Home Sharing service delivery). • Effective supervision and leadership skills. 		
Key Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A commitment to quality and adherence to standards of good practice and excellence • Genuine respect and empathy for diversity and individuality. • Flexible, responsible and mature approach to work. • Excellent interpersonal, organisational and communication skills. • Ability to work with others, gain co-operation and build relationships. • Reliable and a flexible approach. 		
Career Development	<p>All employees of Ability West will be afforded Training and Development opportunities in regard to Career Development.</p> <p>In addition, there will be substantial training in legislative, Health & Safety and other job-related training provided on an on-going basis.</p> <p>The HR department will work closely with all staff to ensure that all necessary training opportunities are fair and transparent for all staff.</p>		
Post Holder Sign Off			
Line Manager Sign Off		Date	